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VACAVALLEY RADIO CLUB

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VACAVILLE , CALIFORNIA **February 2016**

President's Message

Dear Club Members -

In taking the reins of this club's presidency for which I did a few years back, the club as a whole is at the crossroads in either is dies and slithers away into oblivion or it holds its own and prospers going forward in the year 2016 and beyond. This club has to have involvement by **ALL** of its members and not just a select few while the rest standby and watch or complain because they don't like how the club is being run or the direction as they see it is being taken in. I'm not going to mince words here in my message: This club has become stagnant and many of you know it has been this way for quite some time.

Nearly all of this club's membership is of the 'baby boomer" generation and we are at or are nearing the retirement age. But yet as we age, I don't see any of the younger generation coming into this club. No, not just youngsters, but younger in the sense of no one at or are near the retirement point. But to attract any new club member, this club has to be exciting and it has to involve itself in worthwhile activities such as: Fox hunts, CW (Morse Code) classes, designing & building antennas, soldering classes, instruction of how to use software for the hobby, community involvement, etc., etc.. But no, this club only has the end-of-the year event in helping to bring in the Christmas season: Merriment on Main.

And nothing more. It's really pathetic.

Since I can't control the postal mail delivery system, I hope that everyone received the 14 point agenda I drew up because each one of the items listed is what I, as your club president would like to see happen in

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VVRC January Meeting Notes, 1/14/2016

Brian Hagen KK6BXP

January's meeting had multiple topics to cover from Marcus'. KI6WDX, agenda that was sent out to the group via E-mail & post.

First on the list of topics was finding a new long term location that is warmer in winter, cooler in summer, and less of an echo chamber, Bruce, N6THN, mentioned that the Nut Tree Airport could be an option. By February's meet we should 'have more details on that location. Another location that was suggested was Round Table Pizza. The meetings there would be paid for by ordering up their food. Other locations had a large price tag attached, at over $100 per meeting. As you mull over the options, remember we are looking for a longterm solution and not a temporary fix. As of now, The Elmira Fire Station remains as our meeting location; with a nice price tag of free.

Next, on the agenda was how many times to meet per year and the meeting raffles. It was decided that we shall keep the current meeting times the same-second Thursday of the month at 7:30 (except for July and August). Previously at each meeting we conducted a raffle; moving forward we will no longer be hosting these raffles.

Brian, KK6BXP, brought up the idea of actually building ham radio items during meetings. Brian will be looking for volunteers to help build a 40M rotatable shortened dipole. The antenna will be the K6IF & W6BDW design, as found on the internet. The plan is to have it built, tested, tuned and ready to go for Field Day 2016. Brian looks forward to working on this with other club members. Since this project is for the first half of the year, the club will need another project for the second half of the year, with the final decision for this being decided by club members at June's meeting. Presentations on ham radio and related topics are a benefit to help bring more interest to our monthly

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Meeting Notes continued

meetings. For February, Brian will be doing a presentation on ECHOLINK. This is an important part of our meetings, and we would like to see presentations from others within VVRC & guest speakers. If you have ideas and or suggestions for presentations, please speak with Frank KJ6RWQ.

We moved on to discuss our membership count, testing, and exposure. We are focused on coming up with ideas to re-engage less active members of our roster, as well as bringing in new members from all age groups. Two main ideas were presented. First: to continue to volunteer at Merriment on Main and to include a booth to bring greater exposure and answer any questions by the public. This has been a favored event by our club members and can be an opportunity to create a presence within the public. Merriment on Main would also be a great opportunity to work with Vacaville C.E.R.T. and see if they would like to set up in a booth next to us. Working with C.E.R.T would satisfy the Amateur Radio emergency support part of our hobby. The second idea was to set up booths at various local Farmer's Markets.

Marcus did lightly touch on the subject of tension between certain club members. Brian offered that the best thing we can do going forward is to avoid tension by making sure that decisions that are made by the club directly benefit VVRC as a whole.

License testing and upgrading will be held at the Benicia club (BARC) on February 6th. This will be a Cram & Exam 1 day event for Technicians & General Classes. Mt. Diablo Amateur Radio Club (MDARC) tests every 3rd Friday of the month. Please use this information to help grow the hobby & VVRC. Marcus brought to the meeting the topic of contesting. The questions that were spurred from this topic: Where do we actually want to go with this? What are the hindrances from doing these events? These contests can be fun and there are plenty of venues to choose from including: special event stations, local historical event anniversaries, to basic contesting.

Things not discussed that were on the agenda:
-Christmas dinner location & prizes. (tabled for later meeting)

Brought up in the meeting for future discussion:
- An updated list of bands of operation. What can you work? Code practice & learning, A Teach/Learn group.

President's Message Continued

this club. At the next club meeting, I'm expecting to receive reports from those members who attended the last meeting on the subjects discussed. As for a new possible meeting location, I hope to have information regarding it. And I'm open to ideas for club activities or involvement. The elected club officers and BOD's are in place to provide direction of this club, but in order for any one member to be proud of their club membership, that member has to be involved in one way or another because without involvement of the club members, this club will continue to be stagnant which does nothing but cause its continued downward spiral.

73, Marcus Maclean, KI6WDX

CQ World Wide Participants Favor Limiting Operating Time to Less Than 48 Hours

According to Part 2 of the 2015 CQ World Wide Contests survey results, contesters want to see a time-limited category for single operators. In September, the CQ WW Contest Committee surveyed everyone who had submitted a log in the 2014 CQ WW SSB and CW events, and issued a public invitation on the cq-contest e-mail reflector. CQ WW Contest Director Randy Thompson, K5ZD, said the committee received 5117 responses from contest operators around the world to Part 2 of the survey, which addressed possible rule changes. A vast majority of respondents answered "yes" to the question, "Do you support limiting the operating time of single operator entrants to less than 48 hours?" Currently, single operators may operate for the entire 48-hour contest period.

"This question was designed to determine how broad the interest in a time-limited category might be," Thompson said in the survey report. "We were surprised at the high level of support for a time limit. It was even more surprising to see that the majority of support was coming from Europe. Even more interesting was that it was serious competitors who wanted this change. While older ages were more in favor, the results were fairly consistent across all."

According to the survey, 2775 respondents answered "yes," and 1638 said "no," while 694 offered no opinion.

A review of CQ World Wide entries for 2015 showed that approximately 90 percent of SSB operators stay in the chair for fewer than 30 hours,

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(2)

Our Newly Elected Officers For the Year 2016

Brian Hagen-KK6BXP **Bob Hewitt, K6HEW** **Marcus MacLean, KI6WDX** **President** **Artthur Miller-KI6UXE** **Frank Garay- KJ6RWQ** **V. President**

Not shown - Richard Craig-KJ6MIB and Ruff Gunn-K6DME

while some 90 percent of CW entrants operate fewer than 35 hours.

The survey results also suggested that a plurality — nearly one-half — of contesters responding would prefer to maintain the separate Single Operator and Single Operator Assisted categories, rather than combining them into one entry category.

GOOD NEWS!

Thanks to **Tom Christman, KE6MDM**, we now have a room that has heating and air conditioning. Tom took the bull by the horns and met with the Administrator and we can use the room for as long as we like.

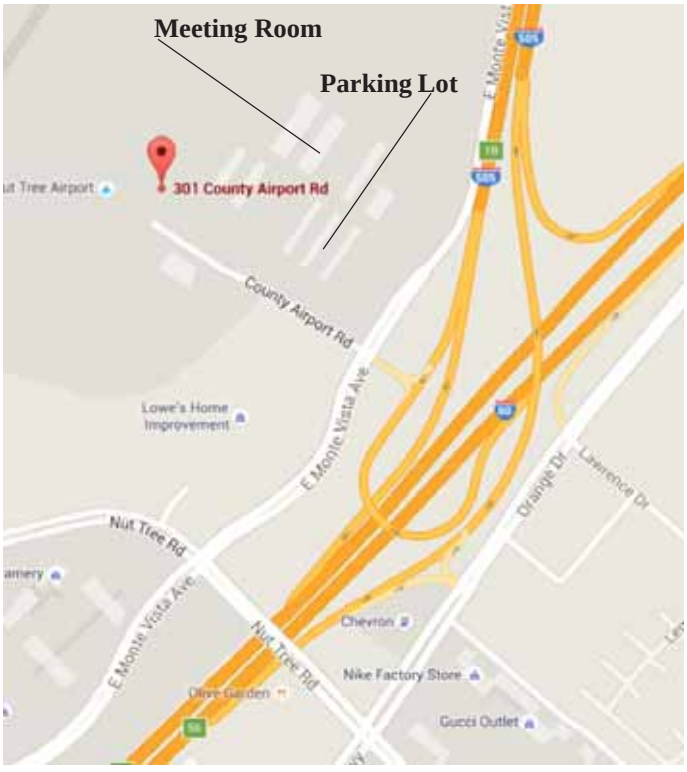
We all owe Tom a big pat on the back. Way to Go!!!

It's located on 301 County Airport Rd, Vacaville, CA

The parking lot is on the right hand side of County Airport Rd.

The entrance to the building is slightly to the left of center.

The meeting room is down the hall way and to the left.



What Makes or Breaks a Ham Radio Club

Submitted By: ***Anonymous***

From a letter to the Editor in an early issue of QST

I think it is very important to be part of and support a Radio Club... Being involved with my club for many years I have seen and experienced many wonderful times...

My club is fortunate to have many active members and we are very diverse in many ways... Unfortunately we are being plagued by what happens with most organizations. It is called egos.

Not to get into details of displaying our dirty laundry I will bring to sight what I think is the demise of all clubs and originations...

The elmers must learn to give way to young blood and thinking... I am an older ham myself but know that young ideas can actually help in the survival of these clubs... I have witnessed many times where a new member of even a seasoned one has offered great ideas but were shunned only because of EGOS! We presently are experiencing this problem. Our club President who has been president for more years than I like to count just won't give into change of great thinking... The membership has been dropping even I am thinking of quitting...

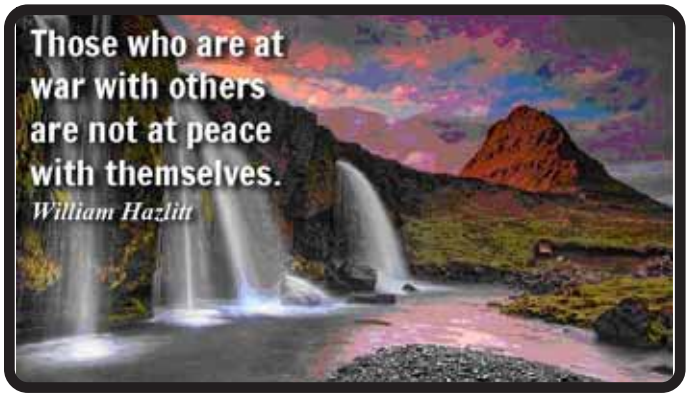
So, in my opinion a well-run club is a club that can be ALL inclusive and able to take advice from ALL members...

Elders, learn to let go, be a mentor not a critic... I mean really who wants to be a member of a club that does not value your input? As in most organizations we are a volunteer army and we should embrace the time members want to give not shun it.

A few members of my club had worked hard in getting the City to donate a classroom and allow them to set up a working station. FREE of charge. This took a lot of work, money and dedication. To me it has been a wonderful success BUT because the stipulation was that the club was to be named different as to satisfy the municipality's rules and regulations my club denounces it and does not support it...

FOR THIS REASON I have decided not to support my club anymore and will support the new endeavor... ALL this could have been a great asset to our club but because of egos it is deemed not part of the club... I hope I am making it clear here as that I don't want to mention club names...

Well, in closing I just want to bring to your attention that clubs are an important part of this hobby but to survive in this market we must learn to pass the baton and be open to suggestion and listen to what the membership wants...



THE VVRC WELCOMES YOU

The Vaca Valley Radio Club has proudly served the Northern Solano County Area since 1988. We pride ourselves in providing a friendly place for radio amateurs to meet and improve their operating skills.

We participate in public service events throughout the year and are always ready to assist with communications during times of emergency.

Browsw our website for more information about our club. If you have any questions please e-mail us at w6vvr@w6vvr.net or call 707-448-5665 for assistance

The Repeater is Published by the Vaca Valley Radio Club, PO Box 143, Elmira, CA 95625-0143, An ARRL Affiliated Club. Founded 1987, Chartered 1988. General Meetings: 2nd Thursday of each month at 7:00 PM 330 Nut Tree Road, (Nut Tree Airport)

Wheelchair accessible

Visit the Repeater online courtesy of Bob K6HEW at: w6vvr

Club repeater in Vacaville:w6vvr.net 145.470 MHz(-) pl 127.3 The W6VVR net call is Tuesday evenings at 8pm on the club repeater. All are invited to participate in this weekly meeting on the air. 73!

Additional local repeater
WV6F 440.025(+)

THE BIT BUCKET

National Parks On The Air NPOTA

Although this article was sent out late it is still valid now

Greetings! Short notice, and I hope you're around to receive this, but the following may be of interest to some of your club's members, including those who are Technicians with no more than HTs.

Please post into your club "reflector" and social media as you see fit.

Many hams here in the SF Bay Area have heard of National Parks On The Air (NPOTA), a new ARRL operating event for 2016. For those who haven't, to help the National Park Service (NPS) celebrate its Centennial, NPOTA lasts for the full calendar year and connects hams everywhere to hams located in NPS units.

The idea is to have a good time, to keep one's radio skills sharp, and to help promote our National Parks in their big year. Contacts on any ham band except 60 meters and using any ham mode are eligible, though repeater, digipeater, crossband, and Internet-supported contacts are not.While you're not in an NPS unit, you're a "Chaser", and your goal is to chase down and contact an "Activator" ham in as many NPS units as possible during 2016. When you're in an NPS unit, you can be an "Activator". Either way, log your contacts in the ARRL Logbook Of The World, and your points are automatically tallied. All licensed Amateurs are eligible; ARRL membership is not required; there is no cost unless you want an award sent to you when it's over.

For details, including rules, tips, and news, see the NPOTA Web page: http://www.arrl.org/NPOTAPete Harris KE6ZIW and I (John Rabold KS6M) will enable hams who are located in parts of the East Bay to make a NPOTA contact during the New Year holiday weekend.

On Friday, January 1, I (KS6M) will be calling for VHF FM simplex contacts from Mount Wanda, on the property of John Muir National Historic Site in Martinez. Pete and I visited Mount Wanda on Tuesday, December 29, and found that parts of Vallejo, Benicia, Concord, and Walnut Creek were visible, in addition to Martinez. But I may do better than that, as I will have a tall antenna and be using 10 or 25 watts. Your HT may work just fine, depending on where you are.

Listen for KS6M from about noon to about 4 pm PST on 146.535 MHz, though you might find me on 146.520 occasionally.On Saturday, January 2, Pete and I will be calling CQ from the visitor center of that same NPS unit, using single sideband, most likely on 15, 17, or 20 meters, from about 11 am to about 3 pm PST. On those bands we will be listening for replies from anywhere in the world, but you may hear us locally and be able to contact us.

Summary: Fri Jan 1, 12 noon to 4 pm, on 146.535 or 146.520 FM Sat Jan 2, 11 am to 3 pm, on 15, 17, 20 meters SSB This won't be your last chance to earn "chaser points" in NPOTA from this area. The Bay Area has something like a dozen NPS units and no shortage of hams to "activate" them. But this one gets the NPS Centennial Year off to a quick start and honors the memory of John Muir, long an East Bay resident.Remember to write down the date and time and frequency of the contact, the mode (FM or SSB), and the call sign of the ham you contacted. (Be sure the date and time are in UTC, which is 8 hours ahead of Pacific Standard Time.) You will need that information when you upload your log to Logbook of the World.Happy New Year and 73! Pete and I hope to talk to you by radio this weekend!

John Rabold — KS6M

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NET CONTROL OPERATORS

1st week of month-Jerry Bowen, KJ6SCC
2nd week of month-Marcus MacLean, KI6WDX
3rd week of month-Chris Jones, KD7TQO
4th week of month-Brian Hagen, KK6BXP
On months with 5 weeks-Bob Hewitt, K6HEW

New HF Operators – Things to do

From the ARRL Newsletter

We're heading into a somewhat quiet weekend, contest-wise, January 16. The NAQP will be lighting up the bands for 12 hours starting on Saturday, but single ops can only have 10 hours of operating time; the 12-hour BARTG RTTY Sprint will be popular on January 23.

NCDXF Beacon Shuffle - if you have any automated systems or software that listen for the NCDXF Beacons, you'll want to update the call sign list, as there are some recent changes.

Please refer to this message from Bob, N6TV, for the details on how to listen for the new beacon, KH6RS replacing KH6WO.

The Aggregator program which feeds spots to the RBN server will be updated upon the return of the program author, W3OA, from the K5P Palmyra DXpedition, enabling RBN spots of the new beacon.

Tips for Beginning Net Control Operators

Here in northwest Ohio, we have acquired many new hams and encourage them to operate as net control station (NCS) for various routine nets to gain them experience, providing us with a pool of competent net controllers in the event of an emergency/ disaster. Here are some of the basic tips we convey to our novice net control stations for a smoothly running net:

· Get a glass of water or something to drink.

· Make yourself comfortable. Sit in a good location with plenty of room on a desk or table to write.

· Have a good writing instrument and a back-up along with an extra piece of paper in case you need to jot down notes.

· Take your time; go at your own pace. Remember, you are in control of the net and the frequency.

· Don't worry about making mistakes; there are no mistakes to be made.

· To handle the crowd that is trying to check in, you will develop your own way.

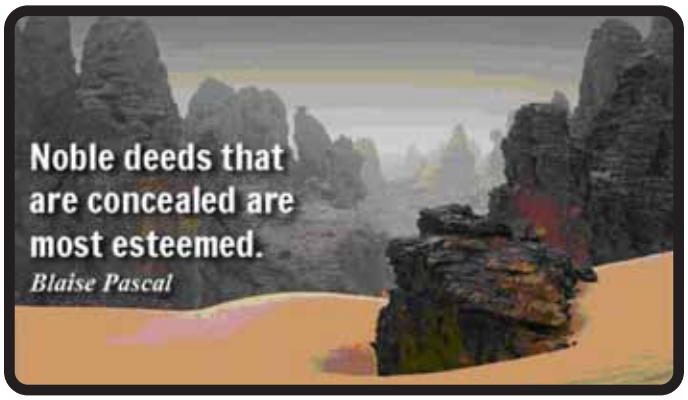
· Stop stations from checking in ("Let's hold it for a minute") until you are caught up.

· Weak stations and stations who give their call signs too fast, are always a problem — skip them at first. Go back later for repeats.

· Write your log as you see fit. You are the one that has to read it.

· Headphones are a good idea — they help you focus on what you are hearing and help keep you from getting distracted.

As I mentioned before, there are no mistakes, only experience. When you've finished the net that is what you will have. — *Steve Bellner, W8TER, Maumee, Ohio*



2016 Officers

President: Marcus MacLean-KI6WDX
VP: Frank Garay-KJ6RWQ
Treasurer: Bob Hewitt-K6HEW
Secretary: Brian Hagen-KK6BXP

Board of Directors:
Brian Hagen-KK6BXP
Ruff Gunn-K6DME
Antonio Del Rio-N6ZGB
Richard Craig-KJ6MIB
Artthur Miller-KI6UXE

APPOINTED POSITIONS
VVRC Net Control Chairperson
Club Activities Chairperson-Frank Garay-KJ6RWQ
Newsletter Editor-Jerry Bowen, KJ6SCC
Newsletter Publisher & Distributor-Bob Hewitt, K6HEW

Severe Weather Curtails VP8STI South Sandwich Operation; Team Heads to South Georgia

It's been a tense time for the Intrepid-DX Group's VP8 DXpedition team on South Sandwich, which had been operating as VP8STI. A fierce South Atlantic storm bearing 70 MPH winds and dropping 2 to 3 feet of snow slammed the VP8STI encampment, threatening to shut down the operation.

"Since early this morning, we have been experiencing blizzard-like conditions with strong winds and heavy snowfall," DXpedition Co-Leader Paul Ewing, N6PSE, said on January 24. "Some of our antennas have become damaged by the high winds, and the snowfall is making access to them very difficult. It is also increasingly difficult to refuel our generators." The group managed to recover, repair its antennas, and return to the air, however, and the VP8STI operators soldiered on despite the adverse conditions.

Not long afterward, though, a storm-related emergency forced the VP8STI team to abandon its equipment and belongings and return to their transport vessel, the R/V *Braveheart*. Chief Pilot Toni Gonzalez, EA5RM, said the *Braveheart*'s skipper, Nigel Jolly, declared an emergency on January 25 at 2120 UTC, ordering the VP8STI team to cease all operations and come back to the ship. According to Gonzalez, a large ice floe that broke away due to the storm threatened to block the entrance to the bay where the team had camped, raising the possibility that the ship might not have been able to retrieve the operators.

While the emergency effectively ended the VP8STI phase of the two-pronged DXpedition, the team was able to return to camp on January 26 to retrieve its gear and equipment. Gonzalez said on January 27 that the team expects to be on as VP8SGI from South Georgia by the afternoon of January 29 and will attempt to operate from there for 8 days.

VP8STI generated hectic pileups, logging more than 51,600 contacts, with more remaining to be uploaded once the team reaches South Georgia. —

Thanks to **The Daily DX** ---------->

So guess who managed to make one of the very last contacts with VP8ST1 before they evacuated the Island?

Why, it was that Ham with killer instinct who is able to track down even the toughest to read signals...Skip-AF6HC!

Congratulations Skip!

Human Radio Transmissions Create Barrier to 'Killer Electrons'

By JoAnna Wendel NASA 16 December 2015

An interaction between radio waves and the Van Allen radiation belts creates a bubble around the Earth that high-energy electrons can't penetrate.

Two doughnut-shaped regions of high-energy particles make up the Van Allen radiation belts. Scientists discovered that very low frequency radio transmissions from Earth may help to create an "impenetrable barrier" at the inner edge of the outer belt that keeps the belt's "killer electrons" away from Earth. Credit:

Scientists have discovered that radio transmissions from Earth have helped to build a shield-like "impenetrable barrier" in space that scatters high-energy electrons and prevents them from coming closer to our planet.

Since the 1950s, humans have communicated with each other—particularly with submarines deep in the ocean—using very low frequency (VLF) radio transmissions at lower frequencies than your favorite sports cast or talk show. After a fortuitous solar storm in March of this year, scientists discovered that it may be these very transmissions that create a protective "VLF bubble" that block high-energy "killer electrons." These electrons, which can damage satellites, as well as future travelers to the Moon or Mars, zip around the Earth within doughnut-shaped regions of space called the Van Allen radiation belts.

"To us it was an amazing insight" that came from NASA's Van Allen probes. These probes continuously take measurements of the two "doughnuts" of high-energy particles that encircle the Earth, said Daniel Baker, director of the University of Colorado Boulder's Laboratory for Atmospheric and Space Physics on Monday, 14 December, at the 2015 American Geophysical Union Fall Meeting in San Francisco, Calif.

A Little Bit of History

Spark Comes

Prior to the invention of spark-generated radio transmission, the commercial potential of any form of wireless communication had come to nothing, despite minor successes of isolated applications. Certainly, commercial telegraphy and transatlantic cable companies had closely followed any effort made to render them obsolete. But they had hardly been concerned about any real threat.

And so it was with spark. Transatlantic cable offices were in the habit of exchanging Christmas greetings, and in 1901, less than two weeks after Marconi's first successful east-west transatlantic transmission, the staff of the Sydney, Nova Scotia, cable station (ironically, located not far from Marconi's eventual installation at Glace Bay.

Glace Bay sent the following tongue-incheek Christmas message to officers in Liverpool:
Best Christmas greetings from North Sydney,
Hope you are sound in heart and kidney,
Next year will find us quite unable,
To send exchanges o'er the cable:
Marconi will our finish see,
The cable co's have ceased to be;
No further need of automatics,
Retards, resistances and statics.
I'll then across the ether sea,
Waft Christmas greetings unto thee.

Came the reassuring British response:
Don't be alarmed, the cable co's,
Will not be dead as you suppose.
Marconi may have been deceived,
In what he firmly has believed.
But be it so, or be it not,
The cable routes won't be forgot;
His speed will never equal ours;
Where we take minutes, he'll want hours.
Besides, his poor weak undulations,
Must be confined to their own stations;
This is for him to overcome,
Before we're sent to our long home.
Don't be alarmed my worthy friend,
Full many a year precedes our end.
How wrong they were.

PLEASE RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

VACAVALLEY RADIO CLUB, INC.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION / RENEWAL FORM

Please Print & Fill in Completely

Name: _____ Call Sign_____

Street: _____

City: _____Zip: _____

Phone: (_____) _____-_____OK to Publish ?(_____)

License Class: _____ ARRL Member ?(_____)

E-Mail Address_____

FAMILY Member (Spouse or Children)

Name: _____ Call Sign_____
License Class: _____ARRL Member ?(_____)

Name: _____ Call Sign_____
License Class: _____ARRL Member ?(_____)

MEMBER Dues __ __ $25.00 _____
Each Family Member __$ 2.00 _____
Student __ __ __ __ __ $ 5.00 _____
Repeater/Autopatch donation __ __ _____
Call/Name badge __ __ $11.00 _____

Paid by CASH: __ __ __ Check # _____

DATE: ___ ___ _____

TOTAL _____

Mail to : Vaca Valley Radio Club, PO Box 143, Elmira, CA 95625-0143